

THE HONORABLE JOHN C. COUGHENOUR

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT SEATTLE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

KENNETH WARREN RHULE and
KENNETH JOHN RHULE,

Defendants.

CASE NO. CR20-0105-JCC

ORDER

This matter comes before the Court on the parties' stipulated motion to continue trial (Dkt. No. 97).¹ Having thoroughly considered the parties' briefing and the relevant record, the Court hereby GRANTS the motion for the reasons explained herein.

Trial is currently scheduled for April 19, 2021. (*See* Dkt. No. 85.) The parties argue a continuance is necessary because the case is complex, the Government has produced over 341,000 pages of discovery to Defendants, and defense counsel need additional time to examine the discovery, confer with their clients, and to effectively prepare pretrial motions and prepare for trial. (*See* Dkt. No. 97 at 3–4.) The parties request that the Court schedule trial in November

¹ The motion states that "Kenneth Warren Rhule agrees with the requested continuance" but does not make a similar representation about Kenneth John Rhule. (Dkt. No. 97 at 4.) Further, Kenneth Warren Rhule filed a Speedy Trial waiver but Kenneth John Rhule did not. (Dkt. No. 98.) Nevertheless, the Court understands that Kenneth John Rhule joins the motion because the motion states expressly that he does and it is signed by his attorney. (*See* Dkt. No. 97 at 1, 5.)

2021. (*Id.* at 1.)

The Court also considers the context in which this motion arises. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to significantly impact the Court's operations. (*See* W.D. Wash. General Orders 01-20, 02-20, 07-20, 08-20, 11-20, 13-20, 15-20, 18-20, each of which the Court incorporates by reference.) Specifically, the pandemic has made it difficult for the Court to obtain an adequate spectrum of jurors to represent a fair cross section of the community, and public health guidance has impacted the ability of jurors, witnesses, counsel, and Court staff to be present in the courtroom. (*See generally id.*) When the Court is able to resume in-person trials, the Court is likely to continue to be limited by public health measures, such as limits on the number of people in the courthouse and courtrooms, which are likely to limit the Court's ability to try cases as efficiently as it would absent a pandemic.

Accordingly, the Court FINDS that the ends of justice served by continuing trial until November 2021 outweigh the best interests of Defendants and the public to a speedy trial. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(A). The reasons for this finding are:

1. Given the complexity of this case and the extraordinary volume of discovery, a failure to grant a continuance would deny Defendants' counsel reasonable time necessary for effective preparation. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(B)(iv).
2. The COVID-19 pandemic has made it difficult for the Court to obtain an adequate spectrum of jurors to represent a fair cross section of the community, which would likely make proceeding with the current trial date impossible or would result in a miscarriage of justice. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(B)(i).
3. Public health guidance has impacted the ability of jurors, witnesses, counsel, and Court staff to be present in the courtroom. Therefore, proceeding with the current trial date would likely be impossible or would result in a miscarriage of justice. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(B)(i).

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1 Accordingly, the Court ORDERS:

- 2 1. The April 19, 2021 jury trial is CONTINUED until November 1, 2021 at 9:30 a.m.
- 3 2. The March 1, 2021 pretrial motions deadline is CONTINUED until September 3,
- 4 2021.
- 5 3. The period from the date of this order until November 1, 2021 is an excludable time
- 6 period under 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(A).
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8 DATED this 15th day of March 2021.

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12 John C. Coughenour
13 UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

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